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PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHLZ  
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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2076

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4649

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2453

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2318

RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2897

RHMFIIU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 3192

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000024

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN; DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: A FIRST LOOK AT THE COMPOSITION OF  
THE NEW MEJLIS

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: A picture is beginning to form of the group of deputies that will comprise the new Mejlis, set to meet for the first time on January 9. Chairman Nurberdiyeva and her deputy, Kasymguly Babayev, have retained their positions, as well as the chairmen of three of the five major Mejlis committees. Although biographic information is available for only about half the deputies, it is enough to conclude that the body will be dominated by the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan. Deputies-elect largely came from the ranks of regional government, national unions, and state enterprises. It is too early to tell whether the confluence of incumbent experience and continued party leadership, along with fresh regional government and representation from other sectors will cast the body in a new light when it meets on Friday. END SUMMARY.

13. (SBU) On December 22, Neytralniy Turkmenistan published the names and current positions of 123 new deputies elected to the Mejlis (parliament) on December 14. Two representative districts did not report final winners. In Lebap province, a runoff election was held on December 28 for two of the three candidates with the largest number of votes, and the winner was announced in a provincial newspaper on January 3. In Mary province, a new deputy was successfully elected in the 101st district, but the deputy-elect immediately resigned, citing "family circumstances." An election is scheduled for February 8.

14. (SBU) A Post review of available biographic data for about half of the 124 known deputies-elect indicates that 12 incumbent deputies who served previously in leadership positions or on one of the Mejlis' five committees have been reelected, as well as one Mejlis staff person. The 12 include Chairman Nurberdiyeva and her deputy, Kasymguly Babayev, who is also First Secretary of the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan (DPT). Also reelected were the chairs of three of the five major Mejlis committees--Maral Paltayeva, of the Social and Economic Policy Committee, Ahmed Chariyev, of the Committee on Local Councils, and Baymyrat Babayev, of the Science, Education and Culture Committee. (NOTE: The other two committees, Human Rights and Freedom, and

International and Inter-parliamentary Relations, will get new chairmen. END NOTE.) Six other incumbents who served on Mejlis committees were also reelected.

15. (U) Post was able to obtain biographic information for candidates representing Ashgabat city, Ahal and Lebap provinces printed only in provincial newspapers. Post could not obtain biographic information on Balkan, Mary, and Balkan province candidates, although the current occupations of the deputies-elect were published in national newspapers. (NOTE: Bottom line, post has biographic information for 61 of the 124 deputies-elect, and minimal information on the remaining 163. (Septels) END NOTE.)

16. (SBU) It appears the new Mejlis will be dominated by the DPT. Available information indicates that 77 percent of the 61 new deputies for whom post has biographic information have an affiliation with the party, including Dashoguz's incumbent Deputy Chairman Babayev. A significant number of new deputies came from regional governments, or were members of the national Halk Maslahaty (Peoples' Council). Four were provincial administrators, 29 were district government officials, and eight served in the now-abolished Halk Maslahaty. At least 22 of the new deputies are school principals or educators, and at least 13 had been functionaries in unions or other state organizations.

17. (SBU) COMMENT: There appears to be many fresh new faces among the deputies, and could be a potential source of new ideas and perspectives as this new Mejlis goes forward. It is too early to tell, however, whether the confluence of

ASHGABAT 00000024 002 OF 002

incumbent experience and continued party leadership, along with substantial regional government and representation from other sectors will cast the body in a new light when it meets on Friday. END COMMENT.  
MILES